

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 161555Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3459

S E C R E T TUNIS 5962

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMER, TS

SUBJECT: E & E PLANNING

REF: STATE 204191

1. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS POSED PARA 2 REFTEL, I DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE THAT TIME HAS YET COME TO WARN AMCITS AGAINST TRAVEL TO TUNISIA, NOR DO I BELIEVE THAT AMCITS IN TUNISIA SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, DISCREETLY OR OTHERWISE, TO BEGIN TO LEAVE. IT FOLLOWS THAT I DO NOT RPT NOT SUGGEST THAT WE INITIATE EVACUATION.

2. WE HAVE ALL OF THESE MATTERS CONSTANTLY UNDER REVIEW, OF COURSE, RECOGNIZING THAT THE SITUATION COULD CHANGE SUDDENLY AND DRAMATICALLY EVEN IN THIS BASICALLY FRIENDLY COUNTRY. BUT FOR TIME BEING, APART FROM INCREASINGLY ADVERSE REPORTING AND COMMENTARY IN LOCAL PRESS, WE HAVE DETECTED VERY LITTLE ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT, CERTAINLY NOT ENOUGH TO WARRANT ANY OF STEPS PROPOSED PARA 2. WE ARE GRATEFUL, HOWEVER, TO HAVE FISCAL DATA AND SAFEHAVEN IDENTIFICATION PROVIDED STATE 204192. SHOULD FORMAL EVACUATION EVER BECOME NECESSARY, OUR PREFERENCE WOULD PROBABLY BE FOR CHARTER AIRCRAFT.

3. OUR CURRENT ESTIMATE OF PRIVATE AMERICANS WHO WOULD PROBABLY REQUEST EVACUATION REMAINS AS LAST REPORTED (TUNIS 5853): 507, AS DOES OUR ESTIMATE OF TOURISTS
SECRET

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CURRENTLY IN TUNISIA: 275.

4. EMBASSY AND USAID HAVE RECEIVED NOTIFICATIONS OF CONSIDERABLE OFFICIAL TRAVEL TO TUNIS OVER NEXT TWO-THREE

WEEKS. AS INDICATED PARA 1, WE DO NOT BELIEVE SUCH TRAVEL SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED ON SECURITY GROUNDS. I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT DEPT TAKE LOOK AT PENDING OFFICIAL VISITS TO SEE IF SOME CANNOT BE POSTPONED UNTIL CRISIS IS OVER. OUR PROBLEM IN HANDLING NON-ESSENTIAL VISITORS AT THIS TIME IS BASICALLY THAT THEY TAKE UP TIME OF EMBOFFS WHOSE SERVICES ARE MORE NEEDED IN CONNECTION WITH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF CURRENT SITUATION. SEELYE

SECRET

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